

# MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

## Success Stories from the Field

### North Coast Components

#### Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center

#### North Coast Components Achieves ISO:9000:2000 Certification

##### Client Profile:

North Coast Components, Inc. manufactures relays and cable and wire harnesses for original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and other customers. Founded in 1985, the company employs 17 people at its Hudsonville, Michigan plant.

##### Situation:

North Coast Component (NCC)'s president and owner, Mary Nienhuis, first heard from customers about the ISO 9000:2000 quality standard and the benefits of certification. In September of 2002, she and her plant manager attended a briefing on the new standard and decided it would be right for NCC. She began looking for a cost effective method of implementing the new standard. Ms. Nienhuis was familiar with the Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center (MMTC), a NIST MEP network affiliate, through her interactions with the Office Furniture Industry Council (OFIC), which is facilitated by MMTC's western region office, Right Place, Inc. (RPI). Ms. Nienhuis asked RPI for help pursuing an affordable ISO certification.

##### Solution:

RPI, in conjunction with the Kent Career Technical Center (KCTC), was preparing to launch an ISO/QS 9000 User Group funded by an Economic Development Job Training (EDJT) Grant when NCC contacted it. Ms. Nienhuis attended the first meeting and completed her paperwork on the spot. After successfully obtaining an EDJT grant, covering approximately 70 percent of the cost, NCC joined the RPI User Group with seven other companies.

The User Group met monthly, facilitated by Superior Technical Training, another RPI partner. Facilitators assigned homework assignments at meetings, allowing company representatives time to return and define measurables and implement procedural changes within their companies. The small size of the group allowed time for personalized training. In addition to the monthly meetings, Superior Technical Training scheduled monthly site visits with the companies to address company-specific implementation questions. The User Group wrapped-up training in June of 2003.

NCC received its ISO certification in December 2003, and NCC customers are pleased with the improved quality of products and services. NCC has increased its market credibility by securing a certification that backs the company's claims. The company made many internal improvements as well. Teamwork and job satisfaction have increased, and management is now able to compare usage reports, detecting patterns in workflow and working to eliminate errors more quickly and efficiently.

##### Results:

- \* Achieved ISO 9000:2000 certification.
- \* Increased market credibility.

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- \* Implemented visual cues at each workstation.
  - \* Embraced philosophy of continuous improvement.
  - \* Improved processes for more timely service and response.
- Increased customer satisfaction.

### **Testimonial:**

"We easily got more back from the [Michigan Manufacturing Technology Center] user group process than we put into it. I feel confident, after this training, that I or my plant manager could implement an ISO certified quality system in any company."

Mary A. Nienhuis, President